

"FOLLOWING THE GLEAM"

by

J. S. Woodsworth

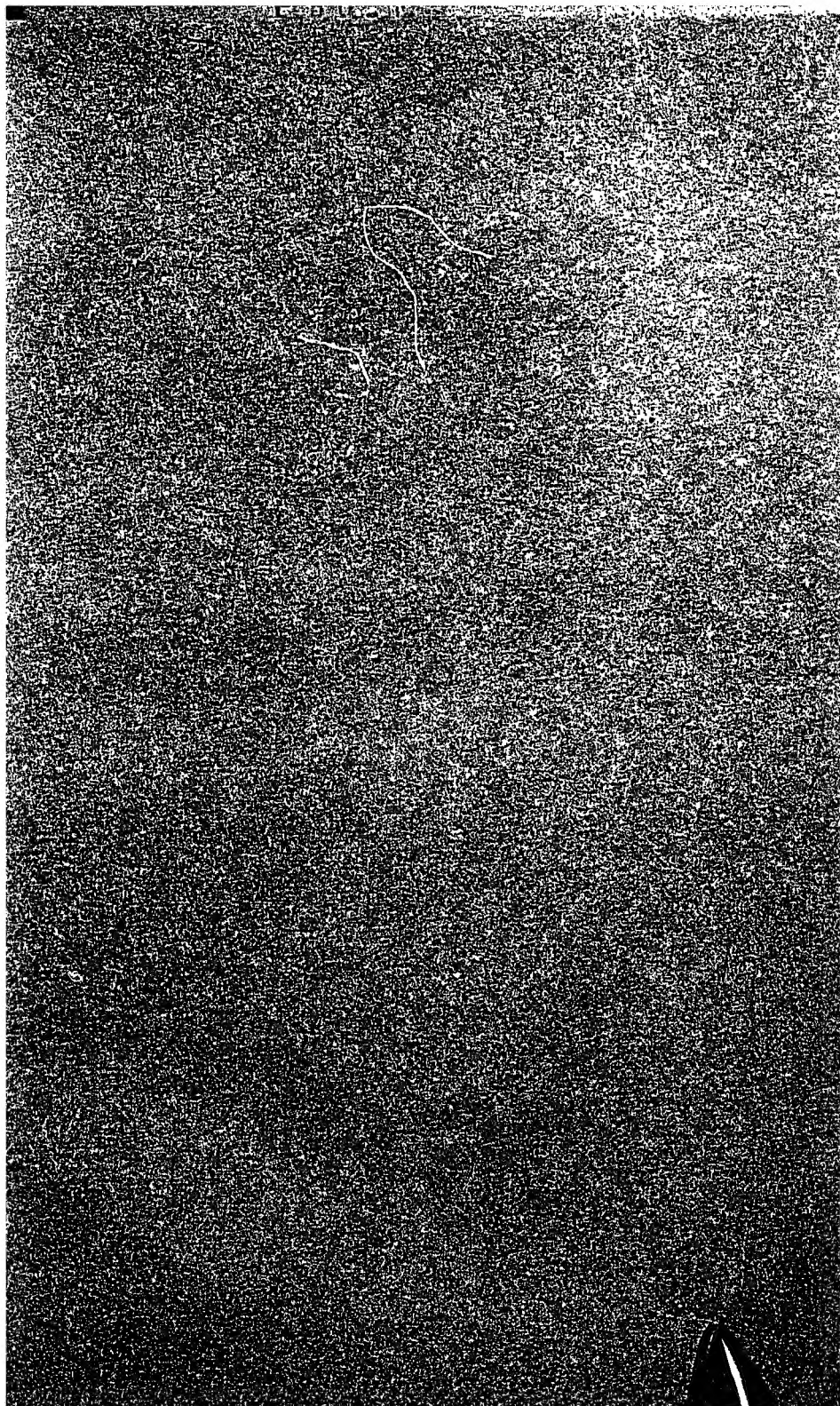
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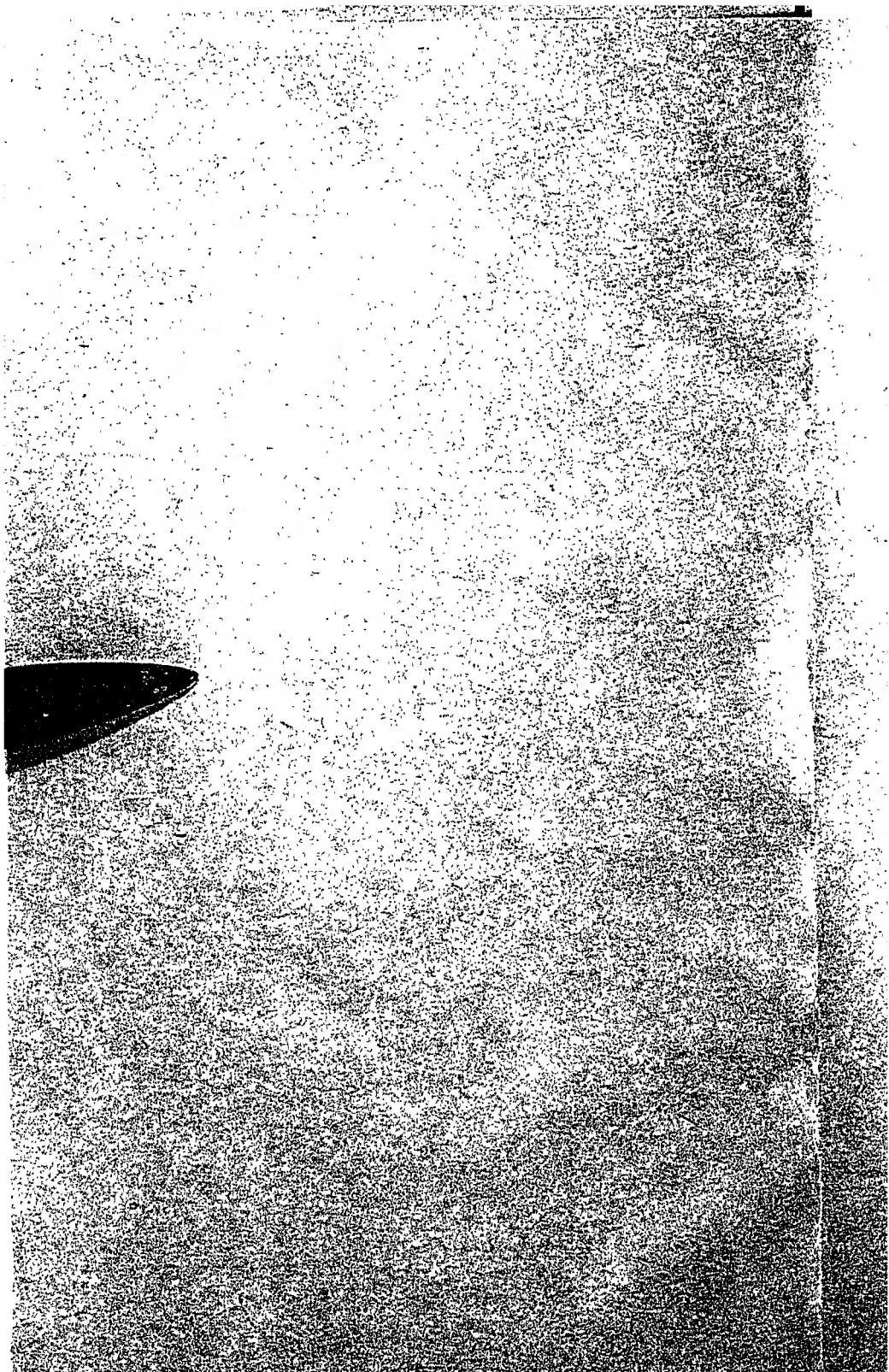
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# "Following The Gleam"

A Modern Pilgrim's Progress  
—to date !



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*By*

**J. S. WOODSWORTH**

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# *“Following the Gleam”*

A Modern Pilgrim's Progress  
—to date!

By J. S. WOODSWORTH, M.P.

- I. Why I lost a Government Position
- II. Why I Resigned from the Christian Ministry
- III. Why I went to Gaol
- IV. My Religion
- V. My Political Creed

## FOREWORD

Three reasons have led me to publish the accompanying documents—(a) I should like to set myself right with friends of former years, many of whom have been entirely misinformed as to my course of action; (b) I would gladly be of some help to my friends of the younger generation, some of whom are passing through struggles similar to my own; (c) I venture to hope that a study of my experiences may serve to indicate, even to the socially un-awakened, the forces that are operating in modern life.

J. S. W.

House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
June, 1926.

616230

## I.

### WHY I LOST A GOVERNMENT POSITION.

Early in 1916 I was appointed Director of the Bureau of Social Research for the Governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. As the World War continued, the position of those opposed to war became more difficult. When the registration scheme was brought forward, the duty of taking a public stand became clear. I wrote the following letter to the Manitoba Free Press and it was published in the issue of December 28, 1916:—

"To the Editor of the Free Press.

"Sir:—

"Yesterday morning there came to me, a circular letter asking my help in making the National Service registration scheme, a success. As I am opposed to that scheme, it would seem my duty as a citizen to state that opposition and the grounds on which it is based. For this end I would ask the courtesy of your columns in presenting the following considerations:

"(1) The citizens of Canada have been given no opportunity of expressing themselves with regard to the far-reaching principle involved in this matter.

"(2) Since "life is more than meat and the body more than raiment" conscription of material possessions should in all justice preceed an attempt to force men to risk their lives and the welfare of their families.

"(3) It is not at all clear who is to decide whether or not a man's present work is of national importance. It is stated that the brewery workers in England are exempt. What guarantee have we that Canadian decisions will be any more sound, and who are the members of the board that decides the question of such importance to the individual?

"(4) How is registration or subsequent conscription, physical or moral, to be enforced? Is intimidation to be used? Is blacklisting to be employed? What other method?

"Is this measure to be equally enforced across the country? For example, in Quebec, or among the Mennonites in the West?

"This registration is no mere census. It seems to look in the direction of a measure of conscription. As some of us cannot consciously engage in military service, we are bound to resist what—if the war continues—will inevitably lead to forced service.

• (Signed) J. S. WOODSWORTH."

"Winnipeg,

"December 22, (1907)"

Within a day or two I was summoned to the office of my Minister. My letter was produced—had been discussed by the Cabinet—much adverse public criticism—a chance to 'be good' which meant to 'keep quiet' which I refused—then in a few days a notification to complete some reports and close the Bureau within a month.

The work of years ended abruptly. I was bitterly denounced. My closest associates said I was a fool.

Nine years have passed. Now Mr. Arthur Meighen lays down certain principles upon which Canada should proceed in the event of the British Empire's becoming involved in war. "I believe it would be best not only that Parliament should be called but that the decision of the government—which, of course, would have to be



given promptly—should be submitted to the judgment of the people at a general election before troops leave our shores.”

Was I wrong in 1916?

## II.

### WHY I RESIGNED FROM THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

In 1907 I presented my resignation with the accompanying statement to the Manitoba Conference of the Methodist Church:—

“To my brethren of the Manitoba Conference:—

“It is perhaps due to you and to myself that I should state my reasons for resigning from the Ministry of the Methodist Church.

“According to our Discipline (Sec. 538) a minister is ordained only after “due examination.” Every candidate for the ministry must be examined, first by the Quarterly Official Board (Sec. 201) and later by the District Ministerial Session (Sec. 168). A number of questions are asked,—“to each of which a distinct answer shall be required.”

“Some of these questions concern discipline; “Have you read the whole Discipline? Are you willing to conform to it? Have you considered “the twelve rules of a Minister,” especially the first, the tenth and the twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience’ sake?” In the tenth rule we find the following: “Do not mend our rules but keep them, not for wrath, but conscience’ sake” (Sec. 57), and the next rule (Sec. 58) exhorts, “Remember! a Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist Discipline!”

“Now these promises involve obligations which I cannot keep. Let me give examples. Among other duties of a Superintendent is this—“To explain and enforce vigorously, but calmly, the General Rules of the Church, in harmony with Paragraph 35 of the Discipline (Sec. 196, p. 4). Paragraph 35 reads as follows: “Note: The General Rules are to be understood as forbidding neglect of duties of any kind, imprudent conduct, indulging in sinful tempers or words, the buying, selling or using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, dancing, playing at games of chance, encouraging lotteries, attending theatres, horse-races, circuses, dancing parties, patronizing dancing schools, taking such other amusements as are obviously of a misleading or questionable moral tendency, and all acts of disobedience to the Order and Discipline of the Church.”

“I do not believe in these rules. I cannot enforce them.

“Again with regard to the Ritual (Sec. 80 p. 4) “In administering the ordinances, let the form in the Discipline be used.”

“In the Order of Baptism for Infants, the opening prayer is as follows: “Almighty and Everlasting God, who of Thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the Ark from perishing by water, and also didst safely lead the children of Israel, Thy people, through the Red Sea, figuring thereby Thy Holy Baptism. . . .” I do not believe that, in any sense, these incidents “figure” Christian Baptism.

“In the Form for the Reception of Members the following questions, among others, are asked:—“Do you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ as the only, and all-sufficient propitiation for the Sins of mankind, and do you look to Him for the remission of sin and eternal life?” “Do you believe in the Holy Scriptures, and accept the same as a sufficient rule of faith and practice?” “Will you be cheerfully governed by the rules of the Methodist Church? . . . . I do not believe that such tests should be required of those who seek admission into the Christian Church.

“In the Order for the administration of the Lord’s Supper, “If the Minister be straitened for time, he may omit any part of the service, except the Prayer of Consecration” which reads—“Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there by His oblation of Himself once offered, a

tull, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. . . . We have here a clearly defined theory of the atonement stated with legal exactness. I do not accept the theory. How can I use the form?

"These examples will suffice. Forms should be more than forms, or they become a mere mockery. Some of the forms I cannot use. Some of the Rules I cannot enforce. Yet I have promised to do so. My position is indefensible.

"Again, some of the questions concern the theological beliefs of the Candidate:—"Do you sincerely and fully believe the doctrines of Methodism as contained in our twenty-five Articles of Religion, and as taught by Mr. Wesley in his Notes on the New Testament and Volumes of Sermons, especially the following leading ones; the total depravity of all men by nature, in consequence of Adam's fall; the atonement made by Christ for the sins of all the human race; the direct witness of the Spirit; the possibility of falling from a state of justification, and holiness, and perishing everlastingly; the absolute necessity of holiness both of heart and life, and the proper eternity of future rewards and punishments? Will you endeavor fully and faithfully to preach them?"

"In addition to the leading doctrines specified here are others mentioned in the examination for Local Preachers;" What is Evangelical Repentance? What is Justification? What is Justifying Faith? What is the difference between Sanctification and Entire Sanctification?"

"Then, in the Articles of Religion, we have the important Articles 2 and 3, containing a statement as to the nature of Christ, involving the doctrine of original guilt and affirming the Virgin birth and the physical resurrection and ascension of Christ. The Articles are as follows: (2) "The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for the actual sins of men." (3) "Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again His body with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until He return to judge all men at the last day."

"Such are the doctrines of Methodism. Without discussing particular doctrines, let me briefly state my position thus—Many of the doctrines, of course, I believe, but, there are some that rest upon historical evidence which, for me, is not conclusive. Some are founded on psychological conceptions and metaphysical theories quite foreign to modern thought and are, for me, meaningless. Some deal with matters upon which, it seems to me, it is impossible to dogmatize. Upon some, I must suspend judgment. Some I cannot accept in the form in which they are stated. Some I cannot accept at all. Yet I am required to "sincerely and fully believe the doctrines of Methodism" and to "endeavor fully and faithfully to preach them."

"It has been stated that the doctrines of Methodism are not those contained in the standards of doctrine. This may be so. Yet, I was required to state that I believed and would preach certain definitely-specified doctrines. Some may say that is it necessary only that I believe the essential underlying truths: But who is to determine what are the essential underlying truths? Words have well-recognized meanings. We cannot play fast and loose with them. Again, it may be objected that if one is held down hard and fast to the letter of the law, there is no room for the development of doctrine. Precisely! But the fact still remains that, as a candidate for the ministry, I was required to state that I believed and would preach certain specified doctrines. I am bound to require all candidates to make a similar statement. So long as I hold the office to which such statements admitted me, and to which I would not, to-day, receive admission without making the same statements, I am bound in common honesty to continue to believe and to preach these doctrines. So soon as I am unable to "sincerely and fully believe them" and to "fully and faithfully preach them," it seems to me that but one course is open.

In the examination of candidates, still other questions relate to personal experience and conduct. Among these are the following:—"Have you been converted to God? Have you now faith in Christ? Do you expect to be made

perfect in love in this life? Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?"

To each of these I must answer in the negative.

Dr. Burwash, fairly representing Methodist teaching defines conversion as "one experimental crisis of religious life, from which a consciously new life dated its beginning." (Note on Wesley's Sermons P. 71). I have never had such an experience. Wesley thus explains saving faith (Sermon 1.5) "And herein does it (saving faith) differ from that faith which the apostles themselves had while our Lord was on earth, that it acknowledges the necessity and merit of His death and the power of His resurrection. It acknowledges His death as the only sufficient means of redeeming man from death eternal, and his resurrection as the restoration of us all to life and immortality inasmuch as He 'was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justification.' Christian faith is then, not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life as given for us and living in us. It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God; and in consequence hereof a closing with him, and cleaving to him, as our 'wisdom righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' or in one word, our salvation."

"I have not this faith.

"Explaining Christian Perfection, Wesley says (P. 406) Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers." I do not expect to be made perfect in love in this life.

"I do not believe in fasting as a religious exercise.

"In this matter of personal experience lies the root of the difficulty. My experience has not been what among Methodists is considered normal. From earliest childhood, I was taught the love of God; and have endeavored to be a follower of Jesus. My experience has determined my theology, and my theology my attitude toward the Discipline. And all three, according to our standards, are un-Methodistical.

"In view of these declarations, many may wonder, not that I leave the Methodist ministry, but that I was able to enter it, and to continue in it so many years. With me, it was not a case of entering the church. I was born and brought up in the Methodist Church and easily found my way into its Ministry. It was not difficult to give an assent to the doctrines of the Church as a whole—though, I may say, that I never gave an affirmative answer to all the questions proposed to candidates. I have always tried to be frank in stating my experiences and views to my brethren, whether in private conversation, or, when occasion permitted, in our ministerial gatherings. I have preached only what I believed to be the truth.

"My decision to withdraw has not been made hastily. Five years ago, I came to Conference with my letter of resignation in my pocket. After consultation with the president and some of our Ministers, I decided to defer any action. I shall never forget the kindly sympathy and truly Christian spirit of my brethren at that time, and subsequently. Then came four busy years of practical work as Assistant-Pastor of Grace Church. I had begun to hope that I might still be able to remain in the Church. But, during the past year, I have had the opportunity of viewing the situation with a certain detachment not possible to one immersed in the manifold duties of the pastorate. I have come to realize that my position in the church is an impossible one.

"I still maintain my loyalty to our common Master. I still feel the call to service. I have no definite plans for the future. It is unlikely that I shall enter the ministry of any other Church. If it were possible, I would still be willing to work under the direction of the Methodist Church. But I must be free to think and speak out my own thoughts, and live out my own life.

"I take this step with no feeling of bitterness toward the Church, and no sense of disloyalty to the Master, but with the conviction that I must be sincere at any cost, and with the belief that He who has been my Guide in the past will still be my Guide—unto the end."

A Committee appointed by the District Meeting, consisting of Principal J. W. Sparling, Dr. Wm. Sparling, and Dr. S. P. Rose, urged me to reconsider my decision. A Conference Committee, consisting of Rev. F. B. Stacey, Rev. Thompson Ferrier, and Dr. James Elliott, after carefully considering my statements, brought in the following report:—

“The finding of your Committee—

“Having had a full and frank conversation with Bro. James S. Woodsworth re the cause of his resignation, we find that there is nothing in his doctrinal beliefs and adhesion to our discipline to warrant his separation from the ministry of the Methodist Church, and therefore recommend that his resignation be not accepted and that his character be now passed.”

Eleven years passed and again I felt compelled to offer my resignation. The trouble now was not one of doctrine or discipline. It was the much more serious question of unorthodoxy in economics and politics. This time my resignation was accepted without protest.

It was as follows:—

“Gibson’s Landing, B.C., June 8, 1918.

“Rev. A. E. Smith,  
“President, Manitoba Conference,  
“Methodist Church,  
“Winnipeg, Man.

“Dear Mr. Smith:—

“After serious consideration I have decided that I should resign from the ministry of the Methodist Church. It is perhaps, due both to the conference and to myself that I state, at least in outline, the considerations that have led me to take this action.

“Within a short time after my ordination I was much troubled because my beliefs were not those that were commonly held and preached. The implications of the newer theological teaching that I had received during my B.D. course and in post-graduate work at Oxford revealed themselves with growing clearness and carried me far from the old orthodox position.

“In 1902 I came to conference with my resignation in my pocket, but the urgent advice of the president and others of the senior ministers persuaded me to defer action. I accepted an invitation to become junior minister at Grace Church and for four years devoted myself largely to the practical activities of a large down-town church.

“Ill-health made necessary a year without a station. This gave me an opportunity of getting out of the routine and seeing things in a somewhat truer perspective. While in Palestine I decided that, come what might, I must be true to my convictions of truth. It seemed to me that, in the Church, I was in a false position. As a minister I was supposed to believe and to teach doctrines which either I had ceased to believe or which expressed very inadequately my real beliefs. I carefully prepared a statement of my position and sent it with my resignation to the conference of 1907. A special committee appointed to confer with me reported that in their judgment my beliefs were sufficiently in harmony with Methodist standards to make my resignation unnecessary, and recommended that it be not accepted. The conference, without dissent, accepted the recommendation.

“What could I do? Left intellectually free, I gratefully accepted the renewed opportunity for service. For six years, as superintendent of All People’s Mission, I threw myself heartily into all kinds of social service work. Encouraged by my own experience, I thought that the church was awakening to modern needs and was preparing, if slowly, for her new tasks.

"But, as years went by, certain disquieting conclusions gradually took form. I began to see that the organized Church had become a great institution with institutional aims and ambitions. With the existence of a number of denominations this meant keen rivalry. In many cases the interests of the community were made subservient to the interests of the Church. Further, the Church, as many other institutions, was becoming increasingly commercialized. This meant the control of the policies of the Church by men of wealth, and in many cases, the temptation for the minister to become a financial agent rather than a moral and spiritual leader. It meant, also, that anything like a radical programme of social reform became in practice almost impossible. In my own particular work among the immigrant peoples, I felt that I, at least, could give more effective service outside denominational lines. Intellectual freedom was not sufficient—I must be free to work.

"For three years, I acted as secretary of the Canadian Welfare League and for one year as Director of the Bureau of Social Research of the Governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Last year, owing to the closing of the bureau, and another breakdown in health, I came to British Columbia. At the suggestion of one of the ministers and by courtesy of the B. C. Conference, I was appointed "supply" on a little coast mission field. Here I have again had the opportunity of trying out church work and learning in still another field how difficult it is to help the people through the church.

"In the meantime, another factor makes my position increasingly difficult. The war has gone on now for four years. As far back as 1906, I had been led to realize something of the horror and futility and wickedness of war. When the proposals were being made for Canada to assist in the naval defence of the Empire, I spoke and wrote against such a policy. Since the sudden outbreak of the war, there has been little opportunity to protest against our nation and empire participating in the war. However, as the war progressed, I have protested against the curtailment of our liberties which is going on under the pressure of military necessity and the passions of war.

"According to my understanding of economics and sociology, the war is the inevitable outcome of the existing social organization with its undemocratic forms of government and competitive system of industry. For me, it is ignorance, or a closed mind, or camouflage, or hypocrisy, to solemnly assert that a murder in Serbia or the invasion of Belgium or the glaring injustices and horrible outrages are the cause of the war.

"Nor, through the war, do I see any way out of our difficulties. The devil of militarism cannot be driven out by the power of militarism without the successful nations themselves becoming militarized. Permanent peace can come only through the development of good-will. There is no redemptive power in physical force.

"This brings me to the Christian point of view. For me, the teachings and spirit of Jesus are absolutely irreconcilable with the advocacy of war. Christianity may be an impossible idealism, but so long as I hold it, ever so unworthily, I must refuse, as far as maybe, to participate in or to influence others to participate in war. When the policy of the State—whether that State be nominally Christian or not—conflicts with my conception of right and wrong, then I must obey God rather than man. As a minister, I must proclaim the truth as it is revealed to me. I am not a pro-German; I am not lacking, I think, in patriotism; I trust that I am not a "slacker" or a coward. I had thought that as a Christian minister I was a messenger of the Prince of Peace.

"The vast majority of the ministers and other church leaders seem to see things in an altogether different way. The churches have been turned into very effective recruiting agencies. A minister's success appears to be judged by the number of recruits in his church rather than by the number of converts. The position of the church seems to be summed up in the words of a General Conference Officer—"We must win the war, nothing else matters." There is little dependence on spiritual forces. The so-called Prussian morality that might makes right, and that the end justifies the means, is preached in its application if not in theory. "Military necessity" is considered to cover a multitude of sins. Retaliation, specifically repudiated by Jesus, is advocated. Private murder, under certain conditions, is lauded. Pacifism is denounced as a vice. Love is tempered by hatred.

"Holding the convictions I do, what is my duty under such circumstances? The Christian Guardian, presumably voicing the thought of the church, discusses the case in its issue of May 1st:

"And if he be a preacher, we presume he may feel that it is cowardly to keep silence, and that truth demands that he testify to what he believes to be the truth. Consistency demands that we recognize this fact.

"But in time of war the state has something at stake, and it rightly refuses to allow a peace propaganda to be carried on in its midst. Not only so, but the Church has a duty in the matter, and that is to prevent unpatriotic speeches in her pulpits. And if the minister who is a confirmed pacifist has a right to speak his mind freely, the Church which he serves has a right to see that he does not use her pulpits nor her authority to damage or defeat the efforts of patriots who are trying to win a righteous war. In every such case the country and the church have a right to insist not only on the absence of seditious or disloyal speech and action, but also on truest patriotic utterances and if a man cannot conscientiously declare himself a patriot he has no business in any Church which prides itself upon its patriotism."

"Apparently the church feels that I do not belong and reluctantly I have been forced to the same conclusion. This decision means a crisis in my life. My associations, my education, my friends, my work, my ambitions have all been connected with the Church. After twenty-two years it is hard to go out, not knowing whither I go. In taking this step, I have no sense of disloyalty to the memory of my honored father or the upbringing of my widowed mother. On the other hand, I have a growing sense of fellowship with the "Master" and the goodly company of those who, throughout the ages, have endeavored to 'follow the gleam.' I still feel the call to service, and trust that I may have some share in the work of bringing in the Kingdom."

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "J. S. WOODSWORTH."

Thus I broke with the Church.

Less than six years later, the Editor of the "Christian Guardian," to his credit, devoted a front page to telling of the change of view that had come to him and to many ministers with regard to war. He wrote as follows:—

"WAR AND THE FUTURE. There is surely not an intelligent, civilized man left in all the world who thinks that there is any virtue or goodness or saving grace in war. And most of us have been driven far beyond that negative position to the very positive and inescapable belief that war is, for our day and time, a hideous, utterly unchristian, unforgivable crime. And in so far as we did not quite feel that way about it just a few short years ago, some of us—many of us—are ready to acknowledge our fault in truest humility, and seek pardon for our ignorance and our lack of the Spirit of our Master. And for the future many of us are ready to say that, if God will grant us grace to live up to our present determination and ideal, never again, under any condition, will war have our sanction or our blessing. And we have come to that place knowing full well that a time might come when very subtle temptations would come to us to feel otherwise about it, or when to announce and live up to our faith might bring its cross and suffering. But very humbly, yet very determinedly, we have made up our minds that in this matter we must try to be Christians, whatever else we are, for if we are not ready now at long last to put our seal to our Christian faith in this way then we surely are not worthy to bear the Christian name at all. In the name of Christ we would set our face for ever against war."—CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN, Feb. 20, 1924.

### III.

#### WHY I WENT TO GAOL.

In the meantime the war was on. I attempted to earn a living for my family by working as a longshoreman on the water-front at Vancouver. That is a story by itself.

A year later, having been asked to address a number of Labor audiences across the country, I arrived in Winnipeg in the middle of the General Strike of 1919. The outside public has yet to be informed regarding the conspiracy to crush Labor and the unscrupulous methods that were employed—including a lying press-campaign. After the spectacular arrests of the leaders and the announcement that they were to be deported under the hastily-passed legislation which had the effect of depriving those born outside of Canada, including British-born, of the right of trial by jury, I found myself attempting to edit the worker's paper, the "Strike Bulletin."

Within a week I was arrested and the paper suppressed. I was charged with seditious libel on six counts. Three of these consisted of articles written by F. J. Dixon, M. L. A., Mr. Dixon was acquitted and the Crown then withdrew the seditious libel charge against me.

The three articles for which I was primarily responsible constituted counts 3, 4, and 6 of the indictment. The viciousness of the prosecution, characteristic of the official activities, may be gauged by a consideration of the moderation shown in the articles—written, it should be remembered, after men had been shot down in the streets.

"The King vs. J. S. Woodsworth.

"The Jurors aforesaid do further present:

"3. That J. S. Woodsworth, in or about the month of June, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Nineteen, at the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, unlawfully and seditiously published seditious libels in the words and figures following:

#### IS THERE A WAY OUT?

"What is the present situation? The sixth week of the strike leaves neither side in control. Both the Strike Committee and the 'Citizens' Committee are determined to hold out. Neither is by any means at the end of its resources. In the ranks there is little sign of weakening. The strike may be prolonged for weeks. In the meantime the business men claim that the city is being ruined—is ruined and the workers undoubtedly will face the winter with reserves sadly depleted.

"The City Council, the Provincial Government or the Federal Government have adopted no constructive policy. They stood prepared only for repressive measures.

"When finally it did seem that the Provincial Government might effect a settlement, the Dominion Government upset everything by its outrageous arrest of the strike leaders.

"In the meantime, the returned soldiers are becoming restless and threatening to take things into their own hands. They are tired of the policy of 'do nothing'—'keep order' so consistently followed by the strike leaders."

(In Law, the whole article of which this is an excerpt must be quoted, The article continues:—J. S. W.)

"Mediation, by a body as well equipped as any that is likely to be found, has apparently failed. There is a deadlock.

"What will happen? How will it end? Is there any possible way out?

"Members, both of the Strikers' Committee and the Citizens' Committee say: 'We must fight to a finish. We cannot afford to yield. If it takes three months, we will see it through,' and both camps raise the roof—or the sky—with applause. But all thoughtful men must think of the terrific cost. Then when one side is brought to its knees what will be done? Someway or another things must be pulled together. After-the-war problems are as serious as war problems.

"Mediators have failed. Possibly something might be done if the principals could only be brought face to face. In spite of the war of words in the newspapers there are very reasonable men in both camps. They are not weak men. They intend to stand by their principles, but they are open to more light and they recognize that there is perhaps another side to the question than that which has bulked so largely in their eyes and consequently determined their action. Unfortunately, personal attacks and the military necessity of showing no spirit of compromise make it difficult for the leaders in either camp to make a move.

"The real difficulty behind the schemes for getting together lies in the fundamentally different and apparently irreconcilable claims of the contending parties. Arguments proceed from different premises. The fact is that the war has thrust upon us an entirely new world situation; thoughtful students and statesmen have warned us that there must be radical measures of re-construction after the war. But we, so far, are trying to carry on business much along the old lines.

"Can we shift the basis of discussion? If two unkind goats meet on a narrow bridge and each insists on fighting it out, one or both will fall into the water. In the case of this strike, whichever side falls in the public may find itself 'in the soup.' In this strike, too, neither goat seems a bit inclined to do the 'kind' act and let the other fellow walk over him.

"But leaving the old fable, is it not possible to find another bridge further down the stream? As an illustration, take a matter which has arisen during the strike. The strikers insist that they will not return to work unless all the strikers are given back their old jobs. They cannot recede from this position. Workers who have no immediate trouble with their employers have given up their positions and have been replaced. Those for whom they came out in sympathy cannot go back on them. On the other hand, the Governments have given ultimatums and Governments, like individuals, don't like to swallow themselves.

"Further, men, risking the opprobrium attached to the strike breaker, have been induced to accept positions. The governments or other employers can hardly go back on these men.

"A deadlock on a narrow bridge. Behind this question of jobs is the bigger question of unemployment. So long as there are more men than there are jobs, and the finding of jobs is left to the individual, there will be industrial unrest. Why could not our Government boldly face the question as the British Government has done? Let the State take the responsibility of finding a suitable job for every man at a living wage. If this were done, the question as to whether or not a man should be reinstated in his particular job would not be a vital one. It would become a matter of readjustment. So, with other matters in dispute. Behind the whole question of collective bargaining and the sympathetic strike lies the question of the democratic control of industry. The British Government is attempting to solve this most important problem by creating new machinery in the form of industrial councils. These are not the solutions proposed by the workers, but apparently they have been successful in forming a sort of 'modus vivendi.' That, after all, is the British way. Adopt some temporary expedient by which we can keep things going and then, somehow, a policy gradually shapes itself. In Canada, so far, we have done nothing. In this strike we have thought only of one or the other winning and then going on in the same old way. It can't be done. We must face the larger issues sooner or later. Why not now?

"It may be claimed that when the battle is at its hottest it is no time to talk of constructive measures. But the loss goes on and permanent peace cannot come until the constructive measures are put into operation.

"Why not the appointment of a strong commission with wide powers? When, during the war, there was trouble with the miners in the Crow's Nest, the Government appointed a Commission to operate the mines. The academic right of the operators to run their own mines was a secondary consideration.

"The right of the miners to a raise in wages proportionate to the increased cost of living was a matter to be worked out. In the meantime the people needed coal. Run the mines!

"So we need a Commission with extraordinary powers; powers to make full investigations, powers to suggest and to enforce radical and far-reaching policies, powers, if found necessary, to actually keep the business of the country going.



"There is, of course, one 'sine qua non.' Such a Commission must be acceptable to all parties concerned. That undoubtedly is the 'stickler.' But there are men big enough and fair enough to be trusted by the majority even of the members of the Strikers' Committee and the 'Citizens' Committee.

"The task of such a Commission would not be an easy one. The strike has revealed how widely divergent are the views of the employers and 'the workers.' Then, what is the alternative? A wider bridge must be found or 'It's a fight to a finish,' and then what?

"Let us reiterate there are very reasonable men in both camps."

"The Jurors aforesaid do further present:

"4. That J. S. Woodsworth, in or about the month of June, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Nineteen, at the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, unlawfully and seditiously published seditious libels in the words and figures following:

"Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed, to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey and that they may rob the fatherless. "ISAIAH (10: 1-2)"

"And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. "ISAIAH (65: 21-22)."

"The Jurors, aforesaid, do further present:

"6. That J. S. Woodsworth, in or about the month of June, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Nineteen, at the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, unlawfully and seditiously published seditious libels in the words and figures following:

#### "THE BRITISH WAY.

"Apparently a good many of our local business men have the idea that after the strike things will go on again much as usual. The war was to them merely an interruption in the smooth current of events—an opportunity, perhaps, for piling up greater profits. It is true that a few months ago, we heard considerable talk about 're-construction,' but the matter was not taken very seriously. In fact re-construction for the Canadian business man was conceived as construction on a larger scale along the old lines.

"The general strike came somewhat as a shock, just as the business men thought things were beginning to get back to 'normal'; the blankety blank people upset everything—housing schemes and all. To say that the business man was angry is putting it mildly. He didn't see that the strike was an inevitable outcome of the industrial and financial conditions brought on by the war. Then someone whispered the dread word 'Bolsheviki' and he became positively hysterical. 'The strike was simply a part of a carefully concocted conspiracy to overthrow constitutional Government in Canada. Five dangerous Reds were responsible for the whole miserable business—off with their heads, and we will have peace and prosperity again!'

"Now, instead of thinking so much about the dreadful things that are happening in Russia, suppose we consider the remarkable changes that are likely to take place in Great Britain. Within the last few days, several men prominent in civic affairs and in the Citizens' Committee, have confessed that they know nothing of the platform of the British Labor Party. Yet, this party is now the Opposition in the British House of Commons and, it is generally conceded, will before long become the Government of Great Britain. Their policy is then already a matter of practical politics and may in the not distant future be carried into operation. Either this, say students of social movements, or the deluge!

"The draft report on re-construction has already appeared in full in the 'Western Labor News' so we touch only on the outstanding points.

"The view of the Labor Party is that what has to be reconstructed after the war is not this or that Government department, or this or that piece of social machinery, but, so far as Britain is concerned, society itself."

"'Revolutionary!' certainly. But the exponents of this view are not persecuted as British and Scotch Anarchists. A goodly number of them have been elected to Parliament.

"The individualist system of capitalist production based on the private ownership and competitive administration of land and capital, with its reckless 'profiteering' and wage slavery; with its glorification of the unhampered struggle for the means of life, and its hypocritical pretense of the 'survival of the fittest'; with the monstrous inequality of circumstances which it produces and the degradation and brutalization, both moral and spiritual, resulting therefrom may, we hope, indeed have received a death-blow.'

"Sounds like a Socialist soap-box orator, eh? And does that really mean the doing away with private ownership of land and capital?—Precisely! 'Why that's Bolshevism'—Oh, no, its only the policy of the party in opposition in the British House of Commons.

"We must insure that what is presently to be built up is a new social order, based not on fighting, but on fraternity—not on the competitive struggle for the means of bare life, but on a deliberately planned co-operation in production and distribution for the benefit of all who participate by hand or by brain—not on the utmost possible inequality of riches, but on a systematic approach toward a healthy equality of material circumstances for every person born into the world—not on an enforced dominion over subject nations, subject races, subject colonies, subject classes or a subject sex, but, in industry, as well as in Government, on that equal freedom, that general consciousness of consent, and that widest possible participation in power both economic and political, which is characteristic of democracy.'

"Anarchist, Internationalist, Pacifist, Pro-German, off with him to the penitentiary. He would subvert constituted authority!' In England he is called into the counsels of Government.

"In the pamphlet which explains the draft programme, a solemn warning is given; 'Whether we like it or fear it, we have to recognize that in the course of the last three and a half years people have become habituated to thoughts of violence. They have seen force employed on an unprecedented scale as an instrument of policy. . . . We may be warned by a perception of these facts that if barricades are indeed likely to be erected now in our streets they will be manned by men who have learned how to fight and not by ill-disciplined mobs unversed in the use of modern weapons, likely to be easily overcome by trained troops.'

"This is not incendiary writing. It comes from Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, who sees some of the dangers ahead if the legitimate aims of labor are baulked.

"But what is this new social order and how is it to be brought in? The Labor Party insists first of all on a minimum standard of living. Each family must have sufficient to provide for decent living—good food, clothing, and shelter, opportunities, for education, recreation, and culture, insurance against accident, sickness, unemployment, old age. The State assumes responsibility for finding men work and providing for all their needs.

"This is not continental Socialism. It is not a Utopian dream. Today England is paying millions of pounds in unemployment benefits.

"In the second place, the Labor Party stands for the democratic control of industry. This means 'the progressive elimination from the control of industry of the private capitalist, individual or joint stock.' It means a genuinely scientific reorganization of the nation's industry no longer deflected by individual profiteering, on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production. ('Rank Socialism!') It means the immediate nationalization of railways, mines and electric power. It means that the worker has a voice and a share in the industry in which he is engaged.

"But how is all this to be financed? How provide for the needs of all? How buy out railways and factories? The Britisher doesn't like the word 'confiscation,' so he has worked out a little scheme to accomplish his end in another way. He is not hot-headed like the Russian. He goes more slowly, but he is just as thorough.

"He proposes that all revenues should be raised from two sources: (a) an income tax, (b) an inheritance tax.

— "The capitalist says he will not engage in industry without the incentive of profit. 'Very well,' says the Britisher, 'go to it.' Make all the money you like but remember the State will take most of it back in taxes.' The Labor Party proposes to exempt from taxation all income not above that necessary to maintain a good standard of living. After that there will be a steeply graded tax 'arising from a penny in the pound on the smallest assessable income up to sixteen or even nineteen shillings in the pound on the highest income of the millionaire!'

"With regard to inheritance there will need to be a complete reversal in the point of view. Today we go on the assumption that a man has a right to say who will inherit his property, the State claiming merely certain inheritance taxes. The Labor Party goes on the idea that naked a man came into the world and naked he will go out again. At a man's death all over what is necessary for the needs of his immediate family will revert to the State. Thus, in the course of a generation all the great estates will revert to the common people of England from whom they were filched by the 'enclosing' of the 'common land.'

"This is the British way and, remember! It is absolutely 'constitutional.'

The surplus which will accrue from these national enterprises and large revenues will be used for the common good. Such is the programme of the British Labor Party, regarded by radicals as rather temporizing and altogether too slow.

"Do our Canadian business men suppose that with revolutions going on all over Europe and with this programme offered in England as a substitute for sudden and perhaps violent revolution that we in Canada are going to be permitted to go with undisturbed step along the accustomed ways?

"No! We, too, must face the new situation. Whether the radical changes that are inevitable may be brought about peaceably, largely depends on the good sense of the Canadian business men who now largely control both the industry and Government of this Country.

"We confess the prospects are not overly bright."

Two years later, my path, as winding as that of Christian in the old steel engravings of "Pilgrim's Progress", led to Parliament Hill. Another four years, and a kind critic, a Minister of the Gospel, writes, concerning me: "From pulpit to parliament has, in his case, been the right step."

Ah!

A step! Several steps! Which have been right? When did they become right?

Is this all the Church has to say to me—and to my young friends for whom life is still a high adventure?

#### IV.

#### "MY RELIGION."

(By courtesy of the TORONTO STAR WEEKLY).

It is with some misgiving that I have accepted the invitation to contribute this article. Political wisdom would suggest a laissez-faire policy with regard to so deep-rooted and controversial a subject as religion. However, I was brought up in the Methodist doctrine that I should be always ready to give an answer to every man that asked me a reason concerning the hope that is in me. So the old-fashioned conscience has gotten the better of prudence and with genuine 'meekness and fear' I venture to indicate the lights by which I steer a somewhat hazardous course.

Frankly, and perhaps as a reaction against earlier experiences, I confess that I do not relish the idea of turning myself inside out to the public gaze, and if I did so, I really do not believe the public would like it, either. Moreover, there is always an inmost self that cannot disclose itself.

It is comparatively easy to say what my religion is **not**—it is not that of childhood days. Why should it be? Strange that in almost every other phase of life we greet change with a cheer but, in religion, we actually boast of arrested development. Paul declared, "Now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things." Why, in religious matters, should a man full-grown, physically and mentally, continue to speak as a child, feel as a child and think as a child?

Again, my religion is not that of the Church. Many of the historical dogmas seem to me entirely incompatible with scientific thought; much of the medieval ritual quite inadequate to express modern needs; and the institution itself too largely dominated by the commercial ideals of our age. Surely, the cry of the Church as of the individual must be, "Build ye more stately mansions, O my soul!" We cannot live within the chambers of yesterday.

Religion for me was once clear-cut. I could outline the scheme of salvation more clearly than I could analyze a sentence. Now 'my religion' is not only less dogmatic, but it is less definite, less certain. Many might say that it is no religion at all. For me the change means emerging from the confines of a stuffy room into the sweet, pure air of God's out-of-doors.

What then is religion? In my college days, philosophy was considered one department of knowledge, theology an entirely different one. Yet both discussed such problems as whether the world showed an intelligent design or whether man was a free agent. Religion was sharply distinguished from 'mere morality' and those of us who dabbled in Christian Ethics were warned against confounding religion with 'ill-digested sociology' and urged to preach the 'simple gospel'—Religion made a constant appeal to the emotional and aesthetic and yet music and art were considered to be simply the hand-maids of religion. Human affection was held to be quite distinct from divine love—sometimes in conflict with it.

For me, these lines of demarcation have ceased to exist. The story of the rocks is more credible than that of Genesis. 'One impulse from a vernal wood' is as religious as a sermon; a socialist agitator may be as devoted as a foreign missionary; human love may become a real sacrament. Indeed if any one test is sufficient, he is most religious, who loves most.

Some have thought religion as the worship of "a Supreme Being." God is regarded as separate and above the world and then there is the attempt to bring the two together again. The infinite is distinguished from the finite and then the finite attempts to define the infinite!

How foolish for us—vanishing dewdrops of a summer's morn—to attempt to describe the Absolute in terms of our own little personalities!

My children are not familiar with hymns of adoration but they have been taught the lines of Hartley Coleridge:

So then believe that every bird that sings,  
And every flower that stars the fresh green sod,  
And every thought the happy summer brings,  
To the pure spirit, is a Word of God.

We have all come to recognize that according to the constitution of the human mind, God is—and must be—conceived in terms of our own deepest experiences—raised it may be to the nth degree. The pastoral tribesman thought of God as a Shepherd and offered to Him the firstlings of the flock; the peasant imaged Him as the sender of rain and fruitful seasons and brought to Him the first fruits of the harvest; the medieval workman conceived of Him as the Master Builder, the Architect of the Universe, and built for him cathedrals crowded with choicest art. So others have thought of Him as King, as Judge, as Father.

We—we still use the old phrases. But how do we, the children of a scientific age, conceive of God?

Repelled by the connotations of the old terms, some among us reject the idea itself. But is not this very repudiation a striving after a higher ideal? As I write, my train is rushing forward through the night carrying me homeward. The universe too is driving onward—we may well believe it is toward some goal and inspired by some increasing purpose. But as I rest back in my seat in the car, I must confess that I am not bothering about the road-bed or the train dispatchers or even possible accidents. I am being carried forward—that is enough. So in his study of phenomena or in his dealing with practical affairs, the modern man is not worrying much about first causes or final causes. He is absorbed in the consideration of the process itself. His faith is shown in his reliance upon the force which seems to be driving the world onward and upward.

And what is the modern man's distinctive offering?—What but a willingness to co-operate with the forces of progress?

Older religious thought was much concerned with the question of personal immortality. We frankly admit that from the strictly scientific point of view, the future is beyond our ken. We may think we find certain 'intimations of immortality.' Have we not all had moments of illumination when 'eternity' became not a period of time but a quality of existence? But after all, our primary interest is with the present life. And we are none the less spiritual for that.

But if we no longer visualize ourselves either as 'walking golden streets' or 'gnashing our teeth in outer darkness' are we then left with no incentives to higher living? For myself I must own that

I was never very keen on being an angel with "a crown upon my forehead" and "a harp within my hand." But the inner urge toward higher things is as strong as ever—yes, much stronger.

No one who knows anything of the fierce joy of the conflict will worry very much about his 'reward in heaven.'

In the presence of mystery, Moses took his shoes from off his feet. So facing the fundamental problems of life and death and the universe, we stand in reverent silence. Ours is not the fear of the savage of something bewitched, nor the superstition of the medievalist before an unfathomed juggler's trick, rather a humility born of the recognition of the limitations of the human mind. We feel ourselves children picking up pebbles on the beach while the great ocean of knowledge rolls beyond.

What of the "experimental religion" of our fathers? That which was considered the normal type in their day belonged to their day—not to ours. Spiritual adventures are forever new. For example, many to-day are experiencing a social re-birth that is as distinct and far-reaching in its effects as was the 'conversion' of an earlier day. Religion is for me not so much a personal relation between "me" and "God" as rather the identifying of myself with or perhaps the losing of myself in some larger whole.

What of the life and teachings of Jesus? Well, they have been a potent influence in my life—strong enough, indeed, to force me to break with the church which, though calling itself Christian, sanctioned the war; strong enough to lead me to denounce the present social system as out of harmony with the teaching and spirit of the Carpenter of Nazareth.

Twenty years ago, I made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As, from a vantage point on the Mount of Olives I looked across to Jerusalem and tried to readjust my beliefs and manner of life in accordance with realities, there came to me with new force the words of Robertson of Brighton—the "sacrifice of Jesus must be completed and repeated in the life of each true follower."

The very heart of the teaching of Jesus was the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth. The vision splendid has sent forth an increasing group to attempt the task of 'Christianizing the Social Order.' Some of us whose study of history and economics and social conditions has driven us to the socialist position find it easy to associate the Ideal Kingdom of Jesus with the co-operative commonwealth of socialism.

Religion has been regarded as conformity with certain practices and dogmas handed down from the past. Religion for me is rather a reaching out to the future—a pressing toward a mark not clearly discerned. Is not the fear of breaking with old beliefs the most insidious kind of unbelief? Faith is a confident adventuring into the unknown.

Haul out; cast off; shake out every sail;  
 Steer for the deep waters only:  
 For we are bound where mariner hath not yet dared to go,  
 And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.  
 O daring joy—but safe!  
 Are they not all the seas of God?  
 O farther, farther, farther sail!

## V.

### MY POLITICAL CREED

#### MANIFESTO OF THE INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY OF MANITOBA FEDERAL ELECTIONS, 1925.

The Independent Labor Party of Manitoba is formed for the purpose of giving political expression to the aspirations of all workers, regardless of industrial affiliation, who believe in the establishment of a Co-operative Commonwealth, with production for Use and not for Profit as its economic basis.

Pursuant to the above declaration, we have in view a complete change in our present economic and social system. We recognize our oneness with workers the world over. In every problem which can confront the State we place "Human Needs" above "Property Rights."

In applying the above, we advocate:—

- 1.—Regaining for the use of the people of this country the Natural Resources which have been so recklessly alienated by incompetent or venal administrations.
- 2.—Public ownership and democratic operation of public utilities; and as soon as possible of essential large scale industry.
- 3.—The nationalization of the banking system.
- 4.—The establishment of a high standard of living with adequate provision for all forms of social insurance.
- 5.—Re employment—the recognition of the responsibility of the State through federal, provincial and municipal administrations, to provide suitable work for all at such remuneration as will ensure a decent standard of living. Failing the provision of such work, adequate maintenance.
- 6.—Generous provision for returned soldiers and their dependents. Those men who risked their lives for State, voluntarily or under conscription, are entitled at least to have their disabilities borne by the beneficiaries of the war.
- 7.—Equal rights of citizenship irrespective of sex, class, origin, religion or property qualifications.
- 8.—Full restoration of civil liberties.
  - (a) The repeal of all legislation restricting freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly or of association.
  - (b) Repeal of the amendments to the Immigration Act which make possible the deportation, without ordinary judicial process or trial by jury, of persons not Canadians by birth or naturalization—including British subjects.
  - (c) Liberty for the workers to enjoy as unrestricted a right of association as is exercised by the "Capitalist interests."

(d) The right of Labor organizations to participate in political activities.

9.—Re trade relations and immigration:—

As free intercourse between nations as is consistent with the maintenance of a decent standard of living. We realize that the rival policies of the old parties (protection or free trade; free or restricted immigration—) do not offer any real solution of our economic problems.

10.—Re taxation:—

- (a) Abolition of fiscal legislation that fosters and sustains class privilege.
- (b) Removal of taxes from the necessities of life.
- (c) Taxation of land values.
- (d) After exemptions of small incomes, a steeply graded income and inheritance tax.

11.—A Capital Levy for the extinction of the war debt.

12.—Proportional representation, with grouped Constituencies.

13.—Re Constitutional Amendments:—

- (a) Abolition of the Senate.
- (b) Legal as well as Constitutional Dominion Autonomy, with proper safeguards for Provincial rights.

14.—Opposition to all forms of Militarism.

- (a) Abolition of Secret Commitments.
- (b) National disarmament.
- (c) The development of a Democratic League of Peoples.



